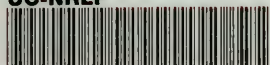


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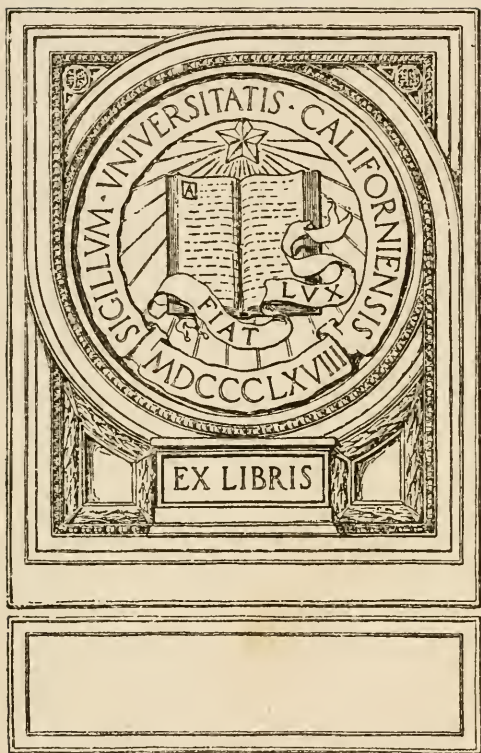


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# THE FAMILY CHAIN

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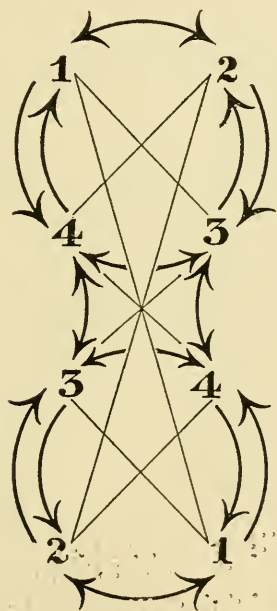


THE FAMILY CHAIN  
MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS OF  
NATIVE AUSTRALIAN TRIBES



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MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS  
OF  
NATIVE AUSTRALIAN TRIBES



BY

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# THE FAMILY CHAIN:

## EVOLUTION OF MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIP OF THE AUSTRALIAN NATIVES

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THE foundation of the marriage systems of the Australian natives is the exchange of sisters by two men of different families.

This is the regular way in which marriages should be arranged, and whatever difficulty the natives have found in complying with this condition, and whatever irregularities have crept in, there is evidence that conscious effort has been maintained to keep alive the fundamental principle. Marriage by capture is one of the irregular methods, and marriage by elopement is another. Both are found to occur everywhere, but they are for the most part exceptional. It is only where the older systems have broken down that the others are found to be steadily taking the first position. But even where this is the case there is evidence that the fundamental principle has given way only slowly, and still asserts itself to some extent. Where families have grown into tribelets, an exchange of sisters between members of two tribelets may occur, and even different tribes are said to keep up the custom. But allowance must be made for what observers consider to be a tribelet or a tribe. When wives are obtained by capture, the women are often stolen by preference from a particular tribe which reciprocates; or, when a wife has

✓ been obtained in this way, the man will compensate her brother by the gift of a sister. However thoroughly the ancient marriage system has broken down, there is an endeavour to maintain the custom of exchange of sisters.

This may be graphically represented by a double-headed arrow placed between two totem names. The simplest example of this occurs in such a tribe as the Urabunna :—

Cicada  $\longleftrightarrow$  Crow

Two totemic families form, as it were, a matrimonial alliance of a binding and permanent character. All the members of each successive generation intermarry, the men cicadas with the women crows, and the men crows with the women cicadas. It is not so much a compact between two men of different totems as between two families. Two such families, if prolific, may people a large area in process of time ; offshoots of such a double-couple, as it may be termed, being detached from the parent stock from time to time. It might thus come about that a tribe of cicadas and crows would be formed, and probably this is the mode of origin of the two moieties into which tribes are divided. The original meanings of the names of moieties are often lost, but when preserved they are generally found to signify animals.

Each moiety of a tribe may be divided into two classes, and the class names sometimes preserve their original meaning. Whenever this is so, some object of a totemic nature is indicated.

The marriages in a four-class tribe may be graphically represented by two double couples—for example :—

Wandi (eagle hawk)  $\longleftrightarrow$  Kutchal (salt-water eagle hawk)  
Walar (a kind of bee)  $\longleftrightarrow$  Jorro (a kind of bee)

When a tribe has each moiety subdivided into four classes, four such double-couples will be needed to represent their system.

These three types embrace all the known forms of regular marriage. They may be conveniently represented by letters, thus :—

<i>Type 1.</i>	<i>Type 3.</i>
A $\longleftrightarrow$ B	A $\longleftrightarrow$ B
<i>Type 2.</i>	D $\longleftrightarrow$ C
A $\longleftrightarrow$ B	E $\longleftrightarrow$ F
D $\longleftrightarrow$ C	H $\longleftrightarrow$ G

These double-couples are linked up to one another by descents which may be represented by two single arrows, thus :—

2.	A $\longleftrightarrow$ B	A $\longleftrightarrow$ B $\rightleftharpoons$ C $\longleftrightarrow$ D
	$\downarrow \uparrow$ $\downarrow \uparrow$	$\downarrow \uparrow$ $\downarrow \uparrow$
	D $\longleftrightarrow$ C	H $\longleftrightarrow$ G $\rightleftharpoons$ F $\longleftrightarrow$ E

Omitting Type 1 for the present, formula 2 is to be read thus : A (male) marries B (female), and, if descent be counted through the mother, their children are in class C. B (male) marries A (female), and their children are in class D. D (male) marries C (female), and their children are in class B. C (male) marries D (female), and their children are in class A.

Formula 3 is to be read in the same way as formula 2, the double-headed arrows indicating marriages, and the single-headed arrows pointing to the children. The formulæ are applicable to both lines of descent, the rule in reading them being to place the parent through whom the descent is counted between the spouse and the child.

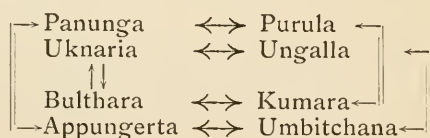
In order to show how these formulæ may be arrived at, an instance will be taken—namely, the eight classes of the

Northern Arunta. The following table is that given by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen :—

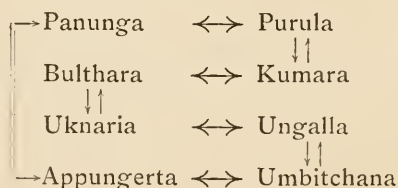
1.	2.	3.	4.
Panunga	Purula	Appungerta	Kumara
Uknaria	Ungalla	Bulthara	Umbitchana
Bulthara	Kumara	Uknaria	Purula
Appungerta	Umbitchana	Panunga	Ungalla

In columns 1 and 2 there are four double couples—Panunga  $\longleftrightarrow$  Purula, and so on. In columns 3 and 4 there are the children of these double couples. Thus Panunga men and Purula women have children who are in the Appungerta class ; Purula men and Panunga women have Kumara children, and so on.

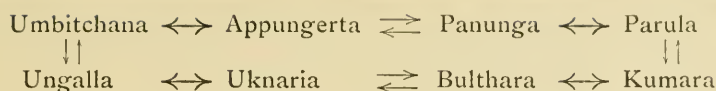
Instead of representing the children in separate columns, let them be indicated by single-headed arrows in the first two columns, thus :—



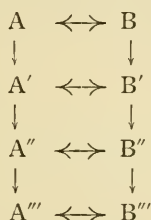
By transposing the two middle terms the long arrows on the right side are shortened, thus :—



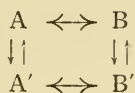
By swinging the four lower terms round in a body so as to shorten the remaining pair of long arrows, the following formula is obtained :—



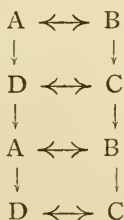
This may be termed the family chain. It may consist of two, four, or eight classes. The two-class chain does not in itself form a ring, but this may be constructed by means of two double couples of the same denomination, as may be shown by placing successive generations in a continuous series :—



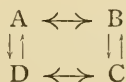
And so on *ad infinitum*. This may be abbreviated to the formula :—



In the four-class type successive generations may be represented thus :—

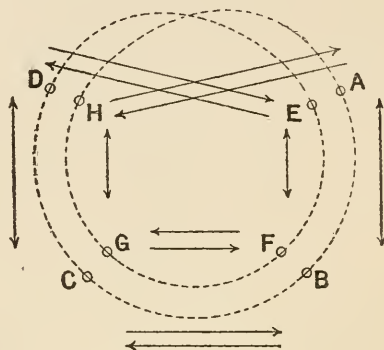


And so on continuously. This, again, may be briefly represented by the formula :—



It thus becomes evident that the two and the four-class systems have practically the same formula.

The eight-class ring may be arranged as a figure of 8 folded on itself. By twisting the ring into this figure and bringing together the two loops, a double ring is formed, thus :—



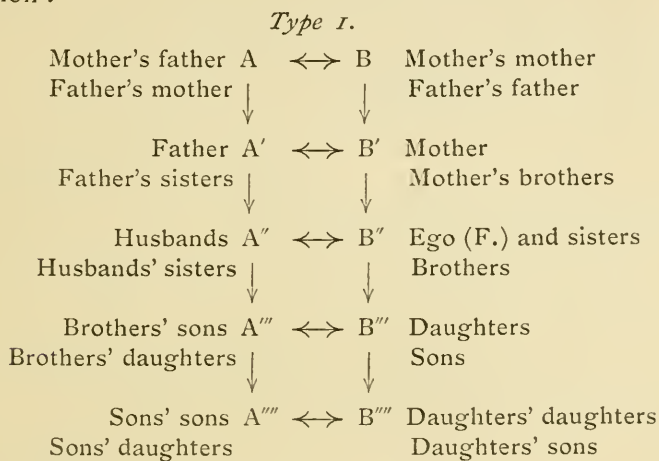
By this figure the complementary classes, which in the single circle of eight links stand opposite to one another, are brought together, E being the complementary class of A, and so on throughout.

A study of the foregoing formulæ in their several arrangements is of use in coming to a conclusion upon the question of the origin of the two, four, and eight-class family types. It is evident that the eight-class type was derived from the four-class, either by fusion of two equal groups of four or by the splitting of each of four classes, and that the four-class is a derivative of the two-class type. The latter, again, is either due to the splitting of a single family or to the blending of two separate families.

The formulæ are of advantage in studying the relationships, which must now come under consideration, as they

are necessary to a proper understanding of the various ways in which the whole marriage system of the Australian natives may have evolved.

With the aid of the foregoing formulæ, terms of relationship can be arranged with facility in such order as to show the reason for certain peculiarities in them and their mode of evolution :—



Type 1 may be represented by the formula :—

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 A & \longleftrightarrow & B \\
 \downarrow \uparrow & & \downarrow \uparrow \\
 A' & \longleftrightarrow & B'
 \end{array}$$

A glance at the foregoing arrangement will suffice to determine what relationships stand in these four classes. They may be briefly represented thus :—

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 A, A'', A''' & \longleftrightarrow & B, B'', B''' \\
 \downarrow \uparrow & & \downarrow \uparrow \\
 A', A''' & \longleftrightarrow & B', B'''
 \end{array}$$

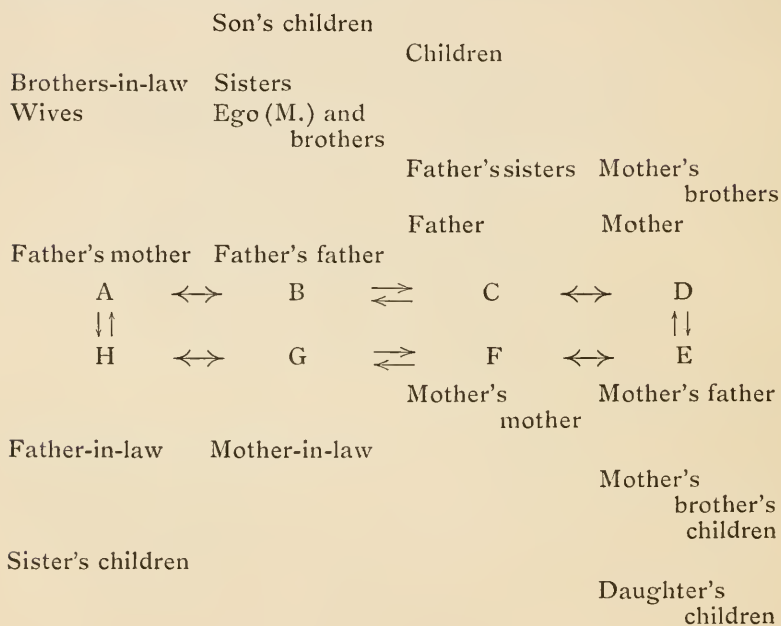
*Type 2.*

By writing  $A \longleftrightarrow B$  alternately with  $C \longleftrightarrow D$  in the

above arrangements it will be seen that in all other respects this type is identical with Type 1.

*Type 3.*

The relationships may be arranged in a single or in a double circle of eight classes :—



It is unnecessary to give the double ring of relationships, as it is seen at once, on looking at the above eight-class arrangement, which are the complementary classes. For instance, B is the complement of F. In a four-class system father's father and mother's mother are in the same class, together with all the other relationships in class B as given above.

The most convenient way of representing the classes and relationships in order is to break the chain, and put the



classes in line at the top of the page, while the successive generations are arranged under their proper classes in due succession, as in the accompanying tables.

In Table I descent is represented in the female line, because in the two-class system, except in tribes which have made a wide departure from the original type, descent is always thus counted. In Table II descent is also counted in this way, in order to facilitate comparison, though in the four-class system descent is counted perhaps as often through the father as through the mother. But in Table III descent is traced through the father, as in the eight-class system it is never counted through the mother.

In Tables I and II a slight departure from the usual method has been made in making Ego, the individual whose relationships are considered, a female. This is done so as to bring the children into the same moiety as Ego. The original mother-right is more clearly shown in this way.

These tables indicate the marked difference which distinguishes the third type from the first and second. The proper person in the first two types for a woman to marry is her mother's brother's son, which is the same thing as to say her father's sister's son. Tables I and II show that the only difference between these two types is the addition of two classes in Type 2, the marriages and relationships remaining identical. The adoption of four classes, therefore, could not have been intended to prevent certain marriages which are permitted in Type 1.

## I

## II

	←	A	↔	B	→	←	A	↔	B	↔↔	C	↔↔	D	→
1	Father's mother Mother's father	Father's father Mother's mother				Father's mother Mother's father			Father's father Mother's mother					
2	Father Father's sisters	Mother Mother's brothers								Mother Mother's brothers			Father Father's sisters	
3	Husband and his brothers Husband's sisters	Ego and sisters Brothers				Husband and his brothers Husband's sisters			Ego and sisters Brothers					
4	Brother's sons Brother's daughters	Daughters Sons								Daughters Sons			Brother's sons Brother's daughters	
5	Son's sons Son's daughters	Daughter's daughters Daughter's sons				Son's sons Son's daughters			Daughter's daughters Daughter's sons					

# III

	← A	↔ B	↔ C	↔ D	↔ E	↔ F	↔ G	↔ H	→
1			Father's mother (Aperla)	Father's father (Arunga)			Mother's father (Chimmia)	Mother's mother (Ipmunna)	
2	Mother-in- law (Mura)	Father-in- law (Ikuntera)			Father (Oknia) Father's sisters (Uwinna)	Mother (Mia) Mother's brothers (Gammona)			
3			Wife and her sisters (Unawa)  Wife's brother (Umbirna)	Ego and brothers (Okilia and Itia) Sisters (Ungaraitcha and Quitia)			Father's sister's children (Unkulla)		
4		Sister's children (Umba)			Children (Allira)				
5				Son's children (Arunga)			Daughter's children (Chimmia)		

In Table III the Arunta terms of relationship are set by the side of their English equivalents, as it is necessary to use them in considering the widely-extended meaning that is given to them by the natives. It is not quite clear from the statement of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, though they set forth much detail with regard to the matter, to what extent the natives give the name of some relationship to all the people in any class, when considered with reference to Ego. For instance, they state that, "If I am an Appungerta man, then my father is a Panunga. All Uknaria are Ipmunna to him, and Mura to me."<sup>1</sup> Again: "Every man calls the members of a particular group by the name of Ikuntera"; and the sense in which the word "group" is used is that of class as it is used here. Now, on reference to the eight-class ring of the Arunta (p. 9), it will be seen that not only are the Ikuntera or fathers-in-law Ungalla, but the children of Ego's sister, the Umba, are Ungalla also. Again: "The daughters of Ungalla men and Uknaria women are Umbitchana, and Unawa to me; that is, they are women whom I may lawfully marry." Yet the Umbitchana class contains, among other women, my father's mother; and the Panunga class, which contains my father and his sisters, has also within it my own children. As it is unlikely that a person will speak of his father and his children by one and the same term of relationship, it is highly probable that, whereas all the members of some of the classes are spoken of by one term of relationship, there are other classes in which there are differently termed groups of relations. It has been seen that the classes in the two-class system do not suffice in them-

<sup>1</sup> *Native T. of C. A.*, p. 84.

selves to distinguish those who may intermarry, but that further distinction is made by generations. This method of determining relationships has, in part, given way to the class system of reckoning ; but to what extent this has taken place is not readily apparent from the statement of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. If one may venture to suggest a possible explanation of this want of a clear and well-defined line between the two modes of reckoning, it is that the blood relatives are still to some extent reckoned by generations, while the tribal relatives of the same designation are reckoned by class. Thus it would happen that the actual Umba would be distinguished from the Ikuntera in the immediate circle of the family, but outside of that all people of that class in which they occur might be treated as Ikuntera. In the same way, the actual Aperla would be held distinct from the Unawa, while the tribal Aperlas might be treated as Unawas ; and the Chimmia, who are in the same class as the Unkulla, might be distinguished from them in the family circle, but outside of that they could all be treated as of one designation. The same mode of reckoning is probably resorted to in the earlier type of marriage, as it is seen in Tables I and II. In Table II the husbands are in the same class as the mother's father and the son's son. All men outside of the family circle who are in class A might be counted as possible husbands ; while within the family circle there could be strict adherence to the marriage rule based on generation.

In the eight-class system it is evident that there is a strong tendency to reckon relations in any particular class under one term of relationship ; and a similar tendency to cut down the number of terms is already apparent even in the two-class system, if it be a correct surmise that the Urabunna grand-

parents and grandchildren, all of whom are known by one term in at least one of the two moieties, have obtained this term by being classed together in a four-class circle. Ego (M) has for father's father, mother's mother, and son's children one term—Kadnini.<sup>1</sup> It may be observed that in the four-class system of reckoning there are two groups in each class. In my own class, B (see p. 11), are (1) Ego, brothers and sisters; (2) Kadnini. In class B' are (1) my mother and her brothers; (2) my children. In class A are (1) my husband, his brothers and sisters; (2) his Kadnini; and in class A' are (1) his mother and her brothers; and (2) his sister's children.

The fact that by this four-class arrangement the Kadnini are all brought together is suggestive. It is probably a rule that the same term of relationship is never found in two different classes, and that therefore at least some of the terms of relationship have been determined by the system of reckoning by classes. If the Kurnai terms of relationship be examined under this rule, it is to be inferred (1) that they were originally a two-class tribe, as Mammung signifies both father's sister and mother's brother's wife; (2) that they counted relatives at one time after the four-class system, for Ngaribil signifies both father-in-law and son-in-law; (3) that they ultimately counted grandparents in four different classes, as they have a separate name for each, which is an eight-class rule; and, finally, it is to be inferred (4) that the peculiarity of calling mother's brother's sons and mother's sister's sons by one term must have arisen after the class system had broken down.

The way in which the marriage system of the Australian natives was evolved may now be taken into consideration.

<sup>1</sup> *N. T. of C. A.*, p. 66. If a female were speaking it would be "daughter's children."

The formation of the double couple suggests the previous existence of solitary families. In his work on *Primitive Paternity* Mr. Hartland has adduced considerable evidence that at one time the husband and father had no status ; it is illustrative of the steady struggle that he had to make to assert authority over his wife and children ; and of the fact that in certain parts of the world he still has no rights, being an interloper pure and simple.

A family so constituted is represented by Table I, B column, with the omission of the father's father, for which may be substituted mother's mother's brother. Between the casual meetings of two such families, at such places as favoured feeding grounds, and the formation of the double couple, there must have been a slow transition, which is not inconceivable. There are some facts of importance bearing upon the formation of a double couple that must be briefly alluded to here. Why should it have been so universal a rule that two men of different families must exchange sisters when they are in want of wives ?

This necessitates a brief allusion to exchange in general, which Mr. Crawley has so amply dealt with in *The Mystic Rose*. Savage man shows himself peculiarly sensitive upon this matter of exchange owing to his theory of personality. When he gives a thing, he is giving himself into the power of another. Hence he would stand at a disadvantage if he did not get the recipient of his gift into his own power at the same time. It therefore is imperative in that stage of mental evolution to make a mutual exchange. And the act binds those concerned in such close friendship that they must be as one man in future ; and when two families meet and exchange women, they are thereby bound to one another for



good and all. Exchange of any kind of gift becomes thus a treaty of alliance.

✓ Exchange of women is, above all other exchanges, a bond of peace, for the native Australians show by their customs at the present day how constantly this practice is resorted to for peace purposes. As Messrs. Spencer and Gillen have shown, the Arunta have no knowledge that sexual intercourse is essential to procreation. If its true purpose be unknown, then what does the native think it is for? A cursory examination of their customs in this regard reveals the central idea which guides them in their practices.

✓ If two men fall out, they will exchange wives in order to patch up the quarrel. If two tribes are in dispute, and one of them sends to inquire what are the intentions of the other, the acceptance or refusal of women sent with the party becomes their answer. Thus women are used not only for the purpose of ascertaining information, but also to sue for peace, to make and to ratify it. They can not only persuade angry men to lose their anger, but the invisible world, which to the mind of the savage is so active in settling his affairs, is sympathetically affected by them. What pacifies men also pacifies the things they handle, such as the decorations they put on for corroborees, which are more likely not to drop off when women have intercourse with the men as they prepare them. The same idea of making peace, wiping off old scores, and forgetting the past is at the bottom of Saturnalia-like gatherings. The idea is thus seen to have been used to its utmost extent, and what stood in its way had to go to the wall. It has been stated that sexual jealousy is very little developed in savages, although it is one of the strongest characteristics of the higher animals. It was in



putting sexual intercourse to its utmost use as a peacemaker that jealousy was rigorously suppressed. The Dieri, after negotiating a marriage with a neighbouring tribe, fix upon a place near the boundary between the two tribes, and a great corroboree is held, during which free intercourse is allowed between the sexes. No jealousy is allowed to be shown on pain of strangulation, but it crops up afterwards and causes bloody affrays.<sup>1</sup> The idea that peace can be promoted in this way has had far-reaching consequences. When one reflects on the consequences to the female sex that must have followed the peace compact between men, which bound them together to act in unison, and thus made them all-powerful in dealing with woman singly, the actual time when woman lost her instinctive aversion to sexual intercourse except at or about her menstrual periods seems to be under review. Perhaps the custom of several men having intercourse with a young woman before handing her over to her lawful husband is traditional from the time when men, working together in the cause of peace, overbore the instinctive aversion of woman, and accustomed her to ways unknown to her before.

Instead of the promiscuous horde, facts point to quite another primitive existence. What promiscuity there was probably was brought about in man's unconscious endeavour to hold people together in the interests of superorganization. If all the qualities that resulted from men banding together followed the formation of the double couple, the primitive solitary family may be regarded as something more nearly animal than human. There can be no doubt that the formation of this early peace compact was an event that

<sup>1</sup> *N. T. of S. E. A.*, p. 185; Howitt.

was the beginning of a new epoch. The formation of the double couple arose by degrees as the result of those natural impulses that are common to all animal natures ; and the reason why it became a conscious peace compact was because primitive man's intelligence had expanded to the point of thus realizing and appreciating it. It must have taken many ages of experience for the idea as a clear concept to rise into full consciousness.

In the evolution of those human institutions that in the course of ages slowly emerge, it is necessary to bear in mind, when studying them, that few, if any, factors of a problem are the same at the beginning and at the end of the period under review. Everything is in a state of flux. Land conformation, climate, vegetable, and animal, as well as man, may undergo considerable changes, while so simple an event as the full development of the double couple comes about. At the time when the double couple had its beginning, human beings may have been, and probably were, something quite different from what they were when it reached full development. What took place in its formation was probably as inevitable as crystallization. Perhaps it was the one narrow way to superorganization.

What man was like at the beginning of it can be seen only dimly and in part. There is one thing about him that we do know, however : he already had a totem ; but we do not know whether he had acquired any form of speech or not. Suppose for a moment that he had not (and it is very likely that he had not), how, then, could he have a totem ? It could not be the totem that we know, aged and branched as it is ; but among its many aspects is one that perhaps is the original one little changed. Primitive ideas and customs

have a way of persisting. It is a kind of proof to find them still extant at home when discovered in savage tribes ; so it is not impossible that when an Australian native identifies himself with his totem he is showing the fundamental notion that is lying at the root of it. To suppose an instance : A man living by the water where duck is plentiful sees and hears it, touches, smells, and tastes it ; it is the principal object of his pursuit, and engages the greater part of his attention. He exercises his ingenuity in catching it, announces his arrival at the camp by uttering its cry, describes his day's adventures by gesture and sound in which duck is conspicuous in its movements and sounds, and joins the family in assimilating it. He protects it from marauders, human and animal, because it is his sustenance ; and when it is plentiful he does not object to sharing it with strangers, not failing when it is scarce, and when the strangers have a surplus, to trot the family over to his neighbours' feeding-grounds. When they approach, their coming is announced by the only signal known to him, the familiar cry of—shall we say?—his totem. Thus is he known to his neighbours, and thus may we picture to ourselves the visit of the ducks to the mallee hens, by which are reciprocated those pleasing offices that are the maintenance of existence and the cause of friendship. It is a striking fact that most of the original names of moieties are those of birds, as far as they are known. Were they among the first totems? Primitive man, possessed of only rude implements, was probably surrounded by birds, tamer than they are now. Mr. N. W. Thomas<sup>1</sup> draws attention to the fact that Eaglehawk and Crow are the phratry or moiety

<sup>1</sup> *Kinship and Marriage in Australia.*

names of several tribes in the South-East of Australia ; but the native words for them differ in each tribe, though they are neighbours. Were they totems before they had names? Mr. Thomas regards them as very ancient. Messrs. Spencer and Gillen<sup>1</sup> give a lively picture of the birds seen at a water-hole called Munda, too long to quote here.

It is probable that the two-class system was in process of evolution over the whole continent of Australia at one time, and had attained to something like full development before the four-class system put in a definite appearance. The four-class system presents a very marked change in two ways from anything found in the two-class system. The names of the classes are not known, as a rule, to signify a totemic object. It is certain if the four-class arose from the two-class system, of which there can be little doubt, that they had that signification formerly ; but they are found at the present time, even when their original meaning is known to be that of a totemic object, not to represent the totem. They definitely signify classes only. The other point of difference is that a child does not inherit the class of either of its parents.

It has been seen that the two-class system bears evidence in the term of relationship for certain grandparents and grandchildren, that it counts relations in four classes. That would naturally lead in course of time to the naming of the additional classes. One way in which such naming might come about is seen in the tendency to call all persons in any class by one relationship term ; but there is no evidence producible here that such was actually the case at any time.

<sup>1</sup> *Across Australia*, p. 462.

A way in which a four-class ring could be formed is by the making of an alliance between two double couples, of which one double couple belongs to one tribe and the other to a neighbouring tribe which would have different totemic names for its classes. These couples could form an alliance in different ways. They might agree to exchange classes; those on each side of a dividing line, such as a watercourse, passing their children into the class of their neighbours on the same side of the stream. Thus, in the four-class formula—

$$\begin{array}{c} A \longleftrightarrow B \\ D \longleftrightarrow C \end{array}$$

A and D exchange classes in their children, B and C doing the same. Such an exchange would be natural enough and binding. Or they might exchange women also in the following way. A and B dissolve partnership, as do also D and C, and then form new alliances, A with C and D with B, forming—

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \longleftrightarrow & C \\ \downarrow\uparrow & & \downarrow\uparrow \\ D & \longleftrightarrow & B \end{array}$$

agreeing at the same time to exchange totems or classes in their children.

The objection to these ways of bringing about the four-class system is that there is lacking a natural half-conscious process, which is more likely to have been the real way. There is, however, yet another method by which it could come about. The two-class system adopted the four-class method of counting relationships at an early date. If there were times when a family actually camped in the four-class form, the parents in one double set and their children in another, they might be joined by a double couple, together

with their children, having other class names, and this would produce the following result :—

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A D' & \longleftrightarrow & B C' \\ \downarrow \uparrow & & \downarrow \uparrow \\ A' D & \longleftrightarrow & B' C \end{array}$$

The parents  $D \longleftrightarrow C$ , joining the children  $A' \longleftrightarrow B'$ , send their own children,  $D' \longleftrightarrow C'$ , to join  $A \longleftrightarrow B$ . It would then be a simple matter to say the children are of the class they have entered. This method is the simplest that could take place, and is in accord with what is known of the capacity and inclination of the people at the time the four-class family was formed, as estimated by the actual occurrence of this formation. It would be natural to commingle, and to make peace by a general exchange, the old men taking the young women. It would give added strength to the community by numbers and new vigour to the stock. This would impart permanence to the alliance.

The eight-class system might in theory have had origin in several ways. The independent existence of the four primary classes of the eight-class system of the Arunta is an important fact bearing upon this question, for it limits the possible ways to two only. The fact that the original four stand side by side in the eight-class ring shows that one of the two following ways must have been the true mode of origin. Either each of the four primary classes must have divided into two, or another four classes joined the original four.

There are facts enough recorded that make it possible to solve this difficult question with the aid of the family circle.

The four classes—Panunga, Purula, Kumura, Bulthara—

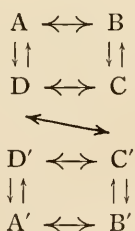


stand in the above order in the Southern Arunta, where they form a four-class ring, and retain the same order when with four others they form the eight-class ring. If there was fusion of two four-class rings, the points at which the chains were broken in order to be linked up together was at the child bond, not at the marriage bond. This is, however, a deceptive appearance that will presently be made clear. If the Southern Arunta were a typical four-class tribe, a man would marry his mother's brother's daughter. But they obey the eight-class rule, which is that only the grandchildren of a double couple must intermarry. Now all the women in the class and generation into which a man must marry in a four-class family circle are mother's brother's daughters, grandmother, and granddaughters, none of whom is he allowed to marry in an eight-class system. It is therefore not possible to split this class into two groups—marriageable and unmarriageable.

It is clearly the introduction of a wife who comes from without into the circle that is the starting-point of the change. On comparing Tables II and III this is evident. Not only the wife, but her whole family, come into the family circle. The remarkable thing about this new wife is that she is of the same class as the mother's brother's daughters were in the four-class circle; but these are now moved to the opposite side of the ring, and form part of the complementary class. The two complementary classes contain all the people divided up between them that formed the primary class in the four-class circle, and in addition the new wife together with her sisters and brothers. In seeking this wife outside of the family circle, the man went to another such circle having the same four names for its classes as his own had.

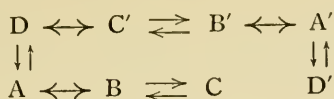
It was obviously one of the same tribe, and that his wife was his tribal instead of his own mother's brother's daughter. But in bringing her in he brought in her father who was not his own mother's brother and her mother who was not his own father's sister, and they had to be distinguished, as had all her relations. Had the same names been retained for all the classes after the circle had been enlarged, there would have been duplication of names as well as of classes. So it was necessary to distinguish one from the other, with the result that the old class in his family circle from which he used to take his wife changed its name, and three of the classes of his wife's family changed theirs. It is thus pretty clear that what led to the appearance of the eight-class type was the choice of a wife outside the family circle, resulting in the fusion of two family groups of the same tribe and class-names, with consequent change of four names to avoid duplication and confusion.

This may be treated graphically by two four-class rings, as follows :—



The first circle contains blood relations of D; the second one contains tribal relations to him. If D, instead of taking to wife his mother's brother's daughter C, takes her tribal equivalent C', we obtain the following incomplete ring of eight :—





In order to put matters quite straight, a council of elder men could and would complete the ring by causing a similar transaction to be brought about between D' and C. Of course, when D takes a wife he gives a sister in exchange.

This satisfactorily accounts for the transposition of some of the relations from one side of the circle to the other. It is thus that, by a simple and natural marriage alliance of two four-class families of the same class names, the eight-class system was evolved, needing only one of those slight adjustments that the elder men in council are known to make, after a man had taken to wife a tribal rather than an own mother's brother's daughter.

It was with a firm conviction that the class system of marriage among the native Australians was not the result of any deliberate design on their part that the examination of it was begun. It is so complicated, so incomprehensible without the aid of the family ring, has extended back to the beginning of any semblance of organization of human society, probably to a time when man was scarcely human, that its evolution is to be compared rather with that of the honeycomb than with such institutions as have been created by legislative acts. The system bears evidence within it of insensible transition in every advance that marks its course. In reciprocal exchange is to be seen the basic idea of mutual suspicion that attaches to each individual together with his environment. Each to the other spiritually pervades a circumambient sphere. As yet individuality lacks a clear-cut

outline, being poorly differentiated from associated objects.

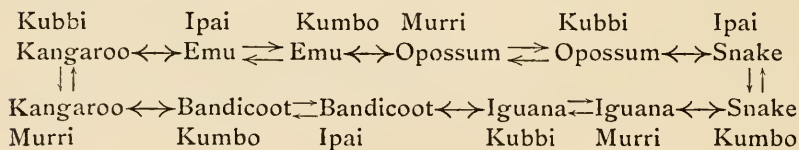
Personality and individuality are one.

Long before the four-class system became an accomplished fact there was the foundation of it in the generations, and when it appeared its advent could scarcely have been noticed. When the eight-class system sprang from the four, it was but as the expanding of a flower.

It was in the course of studying the Australian books for a special purpose that the marriage customs of the natives necessarily came under review. The subject of this paper, being thus but a side-issue, has not been treated as fully as otherwise it might have been ; but it is trusted that, briefly as it has been handled, the exposition of it is sufficiently clear.

The formula will be found useful in solving problems that without it would absorb much time and labour.

To take an example, the table of marriages and descendants of the Kamilaroi tribe,<sup>1</sup> when arranged according to the formula, is simplified as follows :—



The totems without the classes would represent a tribe of two moieties, with three totems in each moiety, forming a family circle of twelve classes, if the parents and children be reckoned as being in separate classes, though of the same totem.

The classes without the totems would represent a typical four-class tribe.

<sup>1</sup> Howitt, *N. T. of S. E. Australia*, p. 202.

The conclusion to be drawn from it is that the two class-system in the south is mingling with the four-class system from the north-east. Mr. Howitt gives some curious examples of it. The anomalous marriages of the Kamilaroi<sup>1</sup> afford an example of how imperfect the blending may be.



<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204.

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